

Processions

Urban Ritual in Byzantium and Neighboring Lands

DUMBARTON OAKS SYMPOSIUM, 12–13 APRIL 2019

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Military, civic, and religious processions were hallmarks of the ancient and medieval world; they continued into the Renaissance and, indeed, continue to this day. The Byzantine procession has not yet been subjected to any synthetic, historicizing, contextualizing, or comparative examination.

Understanding processions is critical for our appreciation of how urban space worked and was manipulated in the Middle Ages. For the 2019 Dumbarton Oaks Symposium, speakers examined texts, artifacts, and images to develop a new understanding of medieval urban life across multiple social registers. For example, records of processions show us what kinds of public behavior were acceptable, and when, and where. Studying processions introduces us to new protagonists as well, for processions involve audiences as well as participants, and groups hitherto virtually invisible, such as the team of people who

prepared for the event by decorating the streets, can be brought to light. The Byzantine commitment to processions is striking in terms of the resources and time allocated: there were as many as two processions a week in Constantinople, many involving the patriarch and the emperor. In the Latin West, the Crusader States, and in the Fatimid, Ottoman, and Muscovite worlds, by comparison, processions occurred far less frequently: the procession was significantly more important to the Byzantines than to their neighbors and successors. The comparative study of Byzantine processions offered by the speakers at the symposium reveals how the Byzantines operated in a complex global network defined by local contexts, how the Byzantines positioned themselves within this network, and the nature of the Byzantine legacy to the Islamic, Catholic, and Orthodox inheritors of their culture.

FRIDAY, 12 APRIL

INTRODUCTIONS

Chair: John Duffy
Nancy Ševčenko, Independent scholar

PROCESSIONS AND THE ORIGINS OF URBAN RITUAL

Chair: Elizabeth Bolman
*The Things They Carried: Religious Processions
in Early Byzantium*
Georgia Frank, Colgate University

*Controlling Material and Semiotic Landscapes:
Processions in Late Antiquity*
Nathanael Andrade, SUNY Binghamton

PROCESSIONS AND THE CANONIZATION OF URBAN RITUAL

Chair: Ioli Kalavrezou
*Bridging the Gap: Processions in Early
Medieval Constantinople*
Leslie Brubaker, University of Birmingham

Public Processions in Middle Byzantine Constantinople
Michael Featherstone, CNRS, Paris/University of
Fribourg

*Sparkling Creations, Threads of Tradition: Marian
Processions in Medieval Constantinople*
Christine Angelidi, National Hellenic Research
Foundation

Processions in the Late Byzantine World
Niels Gaul, University of Edinburgh

SATURDAY, 13 APRIL

PROCESSIONS IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Chair: Ruth Macrides

*Eleventh- and Twelfth-Century Processions in Milan
and Rome: Urban Conflict or Civic Integration?*
James Norrie, University of Oxford

*Negotiating Power in the Islamic Mediterranean:
Urban Processions in Egypt, North Africa, and Iberia*
Paula Sanders, Rice University

The Latin Processions in Jerusalem
Sebastián Salvadó, Independent scholar

PROCESSIONS IN RUS AND AFTER THE FALL OF CONSTANTINOPLE

Chair: Dimitar Angelov

*Princely Processions and Peregrinations: Itinerant
Rulership in Early Rus*
Alexandra Vukovich, University of Oxford

*Changing Times, Divergent Destinies: Processional
Imagery in the Age of the Tsar*
Michael S. Flier, Harvard University

*Guild Processions in Istanbul: Claiming Public Space in
the Early Modern City*
Çiğdem Kafescioğlu, Boğaziçi University

CONCLUSION

Chair: Derek Krueger
Leslie Brubaker, University of Birmingham